

RECOLLECTIONS OF OLD HOUSES

By Mabel R. Bates

Born in the present Seaver house were Laurence, Fred, Florence, Edward and Rowena. Alice and Mercy were born at the old homestead, and Florence and Rowena died when in their teens there. Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Soule passed away while living in the old home.

The Morrisons went to live where the Seavers do now, and a Dr. Avery bought the house and sold it to the Seavers. The Morrisons moved to one of the Ford houses; the Donald Walkers now own it. When the John Morrisons owned it, my children went to school with Dorothy, Rowena and Beulah.

Next house on the left is where James Weston once lived. His daughter, Lucy Ann Cain, lived there with her brother, Frank, and her father, until Eden Soule took over the house. They then moved into the John Weston house. The Westons later had Frank and Mary Cain and son Clement live with James Weston until he died. Frank was in the plumbing business and his son became a priest after going to school out west. A twin brother died at an early age. Edward W. Walker now owns this house. Their daughters, Ann, Ellen and Frances all live outside Duxbury. Frances, the youngest, called on us two years ago, when she came here to see her relatives. She had two lovely children with her.

Next on the same side of the street is Crab Island. I remember when a family named Edwards lived there. The house sits back from the street. I recall that an old grist mill once stood by the entrance to this place. Later it burned to the ground. It was also called Old Ford's Factory. The Crab Island house is almost as old as the John Alden House. It was built in 1646, and was first owned by the Hunts, who were great-grandparents of Marcia Turner and her brothers and sisters. It is a beautiful spot. Later a Mrs. Edwards and her daughter Mae lived there. A son John came home occasionally on a fruit vessel. John always wore a white uniform and was the envy of all the young ladies. He brought my sister and me Costa Rican brooches, which we loved. I lost mine and felt badly.

The next tenants there were the Winthrop Delanos. Mr. Delano had a grocery store in his house, and took orders. This must have been after the Ford Store burned in 1921. Mr. and Mrs. Edward Hodgkins now own the house.

Up the hill is the Dr. Sylvester Kelley house, once a boarding house where the mill workers lived. When I was a girl the Michael Ryan family lived there. After Mrs. Ryan died her husband and son Ralph moved into Mrs. Oldham's place (the Ford house now owned by the Donald Walkers).

At various times, families rented the boarding house. Ed Bailey, a blacksmith, was one tenant. An Arsenault family also lived there, and later the Boltons owned it. The Sylvester Kelley house is very old.

Next is the old store -- the first department store in the U.S. I used to go in one door, and out the other. Sold there were clothing, candy, dry feed for fowl, molasses, kerosene and many other items, including rum, which Daniel Webster used to buy. He was a regular customer at Ford's Store. My

relatives, neighbors, and passing tourists stopped to buy things, and Chester and I patronized the store when we were first married.

The store burned one night in 1921, and it was a terrible loss.

I have my first recollection of the next house as belonging to Dr. Leavitt. I knew Dr. and Mrs. Leavitt well. Then comes the Jonathan Ford house, where Miss Florence and Miss Harriet lived. Florence was my Sunday School teacher. She had a beautiful soprano voice, and sang in the church (First Parish) choir. Harriet was my drawing teacher at school.

Next door was the Ford house where the Oldhams and the John Morrisons lived. It was Miss Alice Henderson who sold this house to Donald Walker. I have heard it said that Donald's garage was the first Millbrook school where Otis Delano was a student. Otis was Mrs. Percy Walker's father.

Next on the same side is the George Ford house, where the Lucius Howards now live. I recall when a Caroline Bradford lived there. She wore a Chinese hat I always admired and had a tree of pig nuts which we children used to pick up on our way home from school. She was always so kind to us. Oh, the memories of childhood!

We loved to slide down the long hill in winter on William Turner's double runner.

Later Miss Lillian Reichart and Miss Eastman and her mother lived there. Miss Reichart's sister Leona also lived there; she now makes her home with Miss Marcia Turner across the street. The Lucius Howards now own the Reichart house.

Diagonally opposite the Donald Walker house is Marcia Turner's house. As far as I know, only the Turner family ever lived in it. Among them are Mr. and Mrs. Turner and their children, Sadie (Mrs. Harry Curtis), Leslie, Edith and Emily. Emily and Edith were twins. The Turner house was moved from the Harry Shapley estate, and was remodeled by the Turners. The house, being the same style, is probably of the same vintage as the Lucius Peterson house.

Now we come to the former Everett Estes house, now owned by Eunice and John Dohoney. Mr. Estes bought the house from a man named Keene, who built it. Here the Estes children were born: Eunice, Everett and Charles. Mrs. Estes and I were close friends and Everett Estes was related to my husband.

Next on the same side is the Thomas place. I remember Mr. and Mrs. William Thomas. My great uncle Hiram Weston, a Civil War veteran, and Grandma White's brother, boarded there and I went with grandma to call. The Thomases had a son who taught at the Millbrook school. Sarah Mac, who was always reciting poetry, lived here once. One of her poems:

"Men make laws, but I don't mind them. I'll pick cranberries wherever I find them."

Polly Glass saw Sarah go by her house one day with a bag of grain on her back. Polly, trying to be funny, said: "There goes Sarah Mac with a bag of meal on her back." Overhearing her, Sarah said: "Polly Glass, you lie. It's part injun, part rye."

There were other tenants after the Thomases died. Then the Harry Shapleys bought the place. I remember that grandma always called Mrs. Thomas "Hannah."

Now we move to Mrs. Percy Walker's house, where the

Walker brothers, Donald and Clarence, conduct a real estate business. I remember when the Walkers came there to live, and before, when Mrs. Howe and her daughter Mildred lived there. Miss Grace Inman, one of my teachers, boarded with Mrs. Howe. After Mrs. Howe moved, a medicine troupe lived there. They conducted entertainments in a hall in Duxbury and a dance board in the grove on the Walker place before he owned it. Percy Walker played in the Myles Standish Band when my father was conductor.

Mr. Walker was always a wonderful citizen, who kept our town respectable. He is very much missed. His sons are following in his footsteps.

Donald Walker told me a story about a woman who called on his parents after the house had been renovated. Mr. Walker showed her around, and later she wrote him a letter thanking him for letting her see changes in the house. Mrs. Percy Walker is a former school teacher.

Now for Legion Hall. This was our one-time Millbrook School, which my grandma attended. She bought her books at the Ford Store, and the only education she received was at this school. I went there many years later, and my children followed. Among pupils and teachers I remember were Miss Grace Inman, Miss Underhill, Miss Mary Harrub (later Mrs. Charles Devereux), Miss Underhill lived nearby and took me to school when I was three years old. She loved children, and took me to help mother out.

Among the pupils were Paul and LeRoy Peterson, Emma, Priscilla and Peleg Alden; Charles, Mary and Walter Prince; Russell Bradley; Helen, Carrie, Alice and Sadie Edgar; Mary Delano, Mary Nickerson, Blanche Peterson Simmons and Louise Boomer.

Other pupils were Minnie Ferrell, Harold Hanigan, David, Howard and Gladys Whaley; Herbert White, William Turner, and so many others.

From this point on, I have only a few houses scattered around whose occupants I remember. I'll write about the houses and their tenants later.

DUXBURY CLIPPER

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